

I CLAIM:

1) A tire safety cage to protect a technician from an explosive air blast when inflating a wheel through its valve comprising:

a frame having a front side, a back side, a top side and an end portion for entry of the wheel into the cage;

a transparent shield positioned on an interior front side of the frame to allow for convenient inspection of the wheel after the wheel is inflated, and to prevent the explosive air blast from passing through the front side of the cage to the technician; and,

a central opening through the shield to allow the technician to access the valve on the wheel.

2) A cage as in claim 1 having further comprising a pressure regulator having an air pressure gauge carried by the frame, said pressure regulator having a low pressure air hose extending therefrom which has a valve chuck on an unattached end portion so that air pressure can be limited to required maximum tire pressure thereby preventing over inflation of the wheel.

3) A cage as in claim 2 wherein the frame is constructed from tubular steel and wherein the shield comprises clear plastic.

4) A cage as in claim 1 further comprising a bottom side portion.

5) A cage as in claim 4 wherein the bottom side portion comprises plate steel.

6) A cage as in claim 4 wherein the bottom side portion of the cage has corner bolt holes in its bottom side portion to facilitate anchoring to a floor.

7) A cage as in 3 wherein the back side portion of the cage has upper and lower end bolt holes which extend through the frame to facilitate anchoring to a rear wall.

8) A cage as in claim wherein a top portion of the cage is semi-circular when viewed from an end thereof, and wherein the front shield extends upwardly around a front portion of the top portion to prevent an explosive air blast from injuring a technician standing in front of the cage.

9) A method of inflating a tire on a wheel having a valve comprising the steps of:

providing a tire safety cage having a front side, a back side, a top side, and an end portion for entry of the wheel into the cage, said cage having a transparent

shield positioned on an interior front side of the cage, said shield having a central opening therethrough;

rolling the wheel to be inflated into the cage;

accessing the valve on the wheel with an air hose through the central opening in the shield and inflating the tire to required air pressure;

observing the pressurized wheel in the cage through the shield for a period of time to ensure that the tire will safely hold air; and finally,

rolling the wheel out of the cage.

10) A method as in claim 9 wherein the cage carries a pressure regulator and an air pressure gauge, and wherein said pressure regulator has a low pressure hose extending therefrom which has a valve chuck on an unattached end portion; and further comprising the steps of connecting an air pressure supply line to the pressure regulator; adjusting the pressure regulator to display the maximum tire pressure in the air pressure gauge; and then, using the low pressure hose and valve chuck to inflate the tire through the central opening.

11) A method as in claim 9 further comprising the step of anchoring the cage to a supporting structure to ensure that in the event of an explosion the cage remains stationary.